

**From:** Monica Samec  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 12/13/01 8:38pm  
**Subject:** Proposal Re: Microsoft antitrust settlement

Dear Justice Department member,

I am writing with regards to the Microsoft antitrust settlement. The Linux company, RedHat has proposed that all the money that Microsoft was currently planning on giving in the form of software for the poorest schools in America be redirected towards hardware.

Red Hat then promises to provide software to the schools, free of charge, with several additions:

- Red Hat will provide software for ALL the schools in America.
- Red Hat will also provide training and technical support.
- Red Hat's offer does not expire, ever. The Microsoft one expires after 5 years.

This proposal has many large advantages over the original plan.

Problems with the original proposal:

- 1) Don't punish a monopoly by extending it and giving it a foothold in the nation's most vulnerable.

In giving so much Microsoft software to the schools, the original proposal would result in extending Microsoft's dominance over the education sector. This does not make sense since the reason why there is a settlement is that Microsoft was found guilty of illegal monopolistic practices.

- 2) After 5 years, the most vulnerable schools will be trapped.

Microsoft's software licenses would expire after 5 years. After that time, the schools would be under great pressure to start paying very large software fees to Microsoft which ultimately hurt their funds very severely. The alternative would be to move away from Microsoft products, but that would be very difficult because the curriculums would already be based around the Microsoft software.

- 3) Most of the money that Microsoft would be "giving" would be entirely fictional to them.

Microsoft's proposal also serves to avoid paying the penalty imposed on it. Independently of how much Microsoft charges for its software, it costs next to nothing to print another CD. Also, it doesn't cost Microsoft anything to give someone a license. A license is not a product that must be manufactured, it doesn't cost the provider anything.

## Benefits of RedHat's proposal:

**\*\* Schools get a much greater assistance.**

1) Over 5 times more computers for the schools.

In redirecting the cost of software towards hardware the number of computers given would jump from 200,000 to over a million. The number of computers per school would grow from 14 to over 70.

2) More schools are benefited.

Every single school in America gets Red Hat software, not just the poorest 14,000.

It is clear that this new proposal brings a much greater benefit to the schools.

**\*\* More security for the schools to build a curriculum.**

2) Red Hat's offer does not expire.

The RedHat software, including all upgrades, will remain completely free to all the schools in America indefinitely.

3) Red Hat also offers free technical support and training.

Just as important as having access to software, is being trained in it and having someone responsible when you have difficulties. Red Hat offers technical support and training, also for an unlimited time.

With this proposal, the schools rest secure in the knowledge that the software they enjoy will remain available to them at no cost. It is now possible to build a curriculum.

**\*\* Red Hat's software is better:**

Red Hat's software consists of the Linux operating system and a very large selection of applications for it.

1) Linux easily the most reliable and flexible operating system in the world. Schools don't have to worry about downtimes.

2) Linux is fast and efficient. The schools can keep their hardware longer.

Windows has a tendency to grow larger and slower over time, forcing

consumers to purchase newer hardware to be able to upgrade. Not so for Linux. Linux itself grows very little over time (in some areas it actually gets smaller and faster). This frees schools from the need of continuous expensive upgrades.

3) The Open Source software running on Linux is of excellent quality.

\* Computer Science.

- Linux offers the best selection of computer languages of any platform, as well as more tools for programming than any other operating system. Several of these (Perl, Python, PHP, Tcl, etc) are accessible to young children, and others (C, C++, Java, etc) can be taught at a high school level.
- Linux offers more tools for programming (program debuggers, editors, etc) than any other operating system.
- The Linux compiler for C and C++ is probably the best in the world.
- Linux comes with the best web server in the world: Apache. Schools can use it to allow students to make their own websites.
- Linux comes with many excellent tools for website development which are certainly accessible to both a younger audience and professionals alike.

\* Science and Mathematics.

For the areas of mathematics, science, and engineering, there is simply no comparison. The tools in Linux are many, they are the most powerful, the most efficient, and they are free. This is why, UNIX and Linux are the standard platform for the physical sciences and math.

To learn more about Linux and children, please visit  
[www.linuxforkids.com](http://www.linuxforkids.com)

\* Imaging.

Red Hat provides the excellent program GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Program) - GNU is an organization responsible for some of the best software in the world.

Children can use this tool to create astounding artwork which might then be used on a printing press or on a website.

References: [www.gimp.org](http://www.gimp.org), [www.gnu.org](http://www.gnu.org)

\* Other.

Red Hat's software also contains several excellent office applications, vector graphics tools, multimedia, etc.

Now that you have seen an overview of what Red Hat is offering to the

schools (I left out much for space reasons), I would ask you to find out exactly what Microsfot is offering to the schools and make a comparison.

It is my honest opinion that the software that Red Hat is offering free of charge far surpasses what would be available to the schools through Microsoft software.

I would like to strongly encourage the Justice Department accept the offer from RedHat and greatly extend the help offered to the most needy schools in the nation.

If you wish to ask questions or clarifications about any of what I have written here, please do not hesitate to ask. I am a strong believer in the importance of education, and this is a great opportunity to help those who are least capable of affording one.

Sincerely,  
Monica Samec

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